



Workforce Board

The Workforce Board is a state agency committed to the development of a highly skilled workforce that will sustain Washington's economic vitality. We accomplish this through research, partnership building, and policies designed to serve a diverse population.

The Postsecondary Skills Gap

Employers Report a Shortage of Workers With Postsecondary Vocational Training

Even in the weak labor market of 2003, many employers had difficulty finding qualified job applicants.

- When surveyed in 2003, 67 percent of Washington employers who recently attempted to hire workers with postsecondary vocational training reported difficulty finding qualified job applicants. This shortage of vocationally trained workers affected over 17,000 employers – more employers than at any other education level.
- Employers most frequently reported difficulty finding job applicants with occupation-specific skills (e.g., they wanted to hire a registered nurse but had trouble finding one.)

FACT

Students completing job preparatory training at a community or technical college can expect to earn about \$6,100 more per year than similar individuals who did not receive training.

Additional Community and Technical College Workforce Education Enrollments Needed

In order to meet employer needs for skilled workers, we must enroll more individuals in workforce education and apprenticeship programs.

- **Job openings for new workers** in Washington with between one and four years of postsecondary education or training is expected to reach 28,600 in 2007 and 29,700 in 2010.
- **The current supply** coming out of community and technical colleges, private career schools, or apprenticeship programs will only meet 82.5 percent of that demand in 2007 and 79.5 percent in 2010.
- **To close the gap** completely by 2010, the state will need more than 22,400 additional students FTEs than in Workforce Education Programs and produce over 6,000 more completers per year.

Solid Outcomes for Workforce Education

- Community and technical college workforce education program completers earn \$22,281 by the third quarter after exit.
- Ninety-three percent of employers who recently hired a workforce education completer are either very, or somewhat, satisfied with the overall quality of their work.
- The net increase in student earnings over their working lives will generate tax revenues that far exceed the taxpayer cost of the programs.

The Workforce Board advocates for the training of individuals to fill the over 75 percent of jobs not requiring a four-year degree.

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